

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

CALL FOR PROPOSALS — EACEA 25/2015

EU Aid Volunteers Initiative: Deployment of EU Aid Volunteers, including apprenticeship placements for junior professionals and capacity building and/or technical assistance for implementing organisations

(2015/C 249/11)

1. Objectives

The objective of the call for deployment is to select, prepare and deploy junior and senior volunteers who will contribute to strengthening the Union's capacity to provide needs-based humanitarian aid aimed at strengthening the capacity and resilience of vulnerable and disaster-affected communities in third countries by means of disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction and by enhancing the link between relief, rehabilitation and development. Furthermore, the call aims to strengthen the capacities of implementing sending and hosting organisations participating or intending to participate in the EU Aid Volunteers initiative.

With this call the European Commission expects to achieve the following results:

- 100 junior and 250 senior professionals deployed to communities in third countries in vulnerable and disaster-affected countries.
- For 100 junior professionals: possibility to take part in apprenticeship placements in Europe before deployment.
- Projects funded under this call provide synergies and complementarity to EU-funded operations in humanitarian aid or civil protection in the respective countries/regions and contribute specifically to:
 - Capacity building of hosting organisations and technical assistance of sending organisations;
 - Resilience building and disaster risk management in vulnerable, fragile or disaster affected countries and forgotten crises, including actions in the following stages:
 - Disaster prevention,
 - Preparedness,
 - Disaster risk reduction and
 - Recovery from natural and man-made disasters.
- Capacities of a minimum of 15 sending and 300 hosting organisations and local communities are strengthened in the fields of
 - Tools and methods of risk and needs assessment at a local level along the disaster risk management cycle.
 - Other areas of capacity building may include:
 - Disaster risk management, preparedness and response as well as linking relief, rehabilitation and development;
 - Volunteer management according to the standards and procedures for the management of the candidate volunteers and the EU Aid Volunteers;
 - Strengthening local volunteering in third countries;

- Capacities to undergo certification including administrative capacity
- Building partnerships with a view of joint projects in the context of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative
- Communicating the Union's humanitarian aid principles agreed in the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid and raising awareness levels and visibility of its humanitarian aid.

2. Budget available

The total budget earmarked for the co-financing of projects under this call for proposals is estimated at EUR 8 400 000.

The maximum grant allocated to a project will not exceed EUR 700 000. Grant requests below EUR 60 000 will not be considered for funding.

The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) expects to fund 25 proposals.

The EACEA reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available.

3. Eligible bodies

All organisations (applicant and partners) involved in applying within this call, and acting as either sending or hosting organisations, must be certified under the EU Aid Volunteers initiative.

The applicants are certified sending organisations under the EU Aid Volunteers initiative.

The partners are certified sending or hosting organisations under the EU Aid Volunteers initiative.

Project proposals involving sending and hosting organisations that have applied for certification before the deadline for submitting applications (Section 8) will be included in the eligibility check and evaluation phases. However the selection of these project proposals would be subject to the outcome of the certification process.

Applicant and partner organisations will be referred to hereafter as 'the consortium'.

When forming a consortium, the certified sending and certified hosting organisations may include as partners other organisations specialised in any areas relevant to the objectives or the actions of the project in order to contribute with their specific expertise (Article 8(3) Delegated Regulation ⁽¹⁾).

The sending and hosting organisations may also include as associates other organisations specialised in any areas relevant to the objective of the action. Such associates play a real role in the action. They have no contractual relationship with the Commission and do not have to meet the eligibility criteria referred to in this section. They may be for example private for profit companies. The associates have to be mentioned in the e-form.

Partners must submit a mandate to be signed by the persons authorised to enter into legally binding commitments, thereby enabling the applicant to act on behalf of the partners.

A project must involve at least three certified sending organisations from three different countries and three certified hosting organisations.

4. Eligible activities

This call for proposals includes two strands:

A. Apprenticeship placements and deployment of junior professionals

B. Deployment of senior professionals and/or joint deployments of junior and senior professionals

⁽¹⁾ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1398/2014 of 24 October 2014 laying down standards regarding candidate volunteers and EU Aid Volunteers (OJ L 373, 31.12.2014, p. 8).

For projects under strand A, the period of apprenticeship of the candidate volunteers may be used to refine the needs assessment and identify the hosting organisations for deployment.

For projects under strand B, hosting organisations may serve as hubs for implementation of capacity building activities in local communities, regions or country-wide activities.

Activities supported under this call may include the following:

1. Selection, recruitment and preparation of EU Aid Volunteers
2. Apprenticeship placements
3. Deployment
4. Capacity building and technical assistance activities including:
 - Study/scoping visits/mapping and analysis
 - Seminars/workshops/conferences
 - Job-shadowing/On the job training
 - Exchange visits of staff/Twinning arrangements
 - Monitoring and Evaluation
 - Organisational reviews/assessments
 - Coaching and mentoring
 - Facilitated retreats/team building
 - Training courses/train the trainers
 - Distance learning/webinars/Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC)
 - Consultancy
 - Exchange of good practice/peer learning
 - Simulation exercises/response assessments
5. Activities to promote involvement of online volunteers as well as employee volunteers to support the actions of the EU Aid Volunteers
6. Communication activities following the guidelines and minimum requirements of the Communication Plan of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative

Projects under the strand B must include a capacity building and/or technical assistance component. A minimum of 15 % of the eligible direct costs are to be activity costs on capacity building and/or technical assistance.

5. Eligible participants

The following persons having a minimum age of 18 years shall be eligible to apply to be candidate volunteers:

- citizens of the European Union; and
- third country nationals who are long-term residents in a Member State.

Candidate volunteers can be:

- junior professionals, in particular recent graduates with less than five years' professional experience and less than five years' experience in humanitarian action; and
- senior professionals with five years' professional experience in positions of responsibility or expert positions.

Candidate volunteers who have successfully passed the standard training for EU Aid Volunteers initiative and its assessment can be considered to be EU Aid Volunteers and will be eligible for deployment.

In addition, those candidate volunteers who have been required to undertake an apprenticeship placement shall complete it and be assessed successfully.

6. Eligible activity venue and timeframe

Apprenticeship placements prior to deployment (only for junior professionals) must take place in one of the participating EU Member States for a maximum duration of 6 months, where possible in a country other than their country of origin.

The deployment period for junior professionals can range between 6 months as a minimum and 18 months as a maximum. The deployment period for senior professionals can range between 1 month as a minimum and 18 months as a maximum.

Where capacity building or technical assistance is directly undertaken by EU Aid Volunteers these shall be senior professionals or/and have a significant track record in capacity building.

A needs assessment methodology and framework has been used to identify a list of priority countries for 2015 for deployment and capacity building in third countries and can be found under the following link: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/eu-aid-volunteers/funding_en

The capacity building and/or technical assistance activities can take place beyond the partner countries as long as the countries concerned are also on the list of priority countries mentioned above.

Projects must start between 1 April 2016 and 31 July 2016, with a maximum duration of 24 months.

Applications for projects scheduled to run for longer periods than that specified in this call for proposals will not be accepted.

No extension to the eligibility period beyond the maximum duration will be granted.

7. Award criteria

Eligible applications will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

- Relevance of the project (maximum 30 points)
- Quality of the project design and implementation (maximum 30 points)
- Quality and relevance of the partnership and cooperation arrangements (maximum 20 points)
- Impact and dissemination (maximum 20 points)

Projects scoring less than 60 overall points will not be considered for funding.

8. Deadline for submission of applications

Grant applications must be drawn up in one of the EU official languages, using the electronic form (e-Form) specifically designed for this purpose. The e-Form is presented on the internet at the following address: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/documents/eforms_en

The electronic application form duly completed must be submitted by 12:00 (midday, Brussels time) on **30 October 2015**.

No modifications to the application are allowed once the deadline for submission has elapsed. However, if there is a need to clarify certain aspects or for the correction of clerical mistakes, the EACEA may contact the applicant for this purpose during the evaluation process.

Applications sent by post, fax or e-mail will not be accepted

Please note that no more than one project proposal can be submitted by the same applicant under this call for proposals.

9. **Additional information**

Applications must comply with the provisions contained in the application guidelines – Call for proposals EACEA/25/15, be submitted on the e-Form provided for this purpose and contain the relevant annexes.

The said documents can be found on the internet at the following address:

https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/eu-aid-volunteers/funding_en

In case of questions, please contact: EACEA-EUAID-VOLUNTEERS@ec.europa.eu
